

and to encourage their recycling. The rules prohibit use of polythene bags made of recycled plastics for storing, carrying or packaging of ready-to-eat foodstuffs. Minimum thickness of virgin or recycled polythene bags has been specified as 20 microns. These rules also provide that the manufacture of plastics shall be undertaken as per the guidelines prescribed by the Bureau of Indian Standards.

Japanese investment in forest projects

†2189. SHRI D. P. YADAV: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Japan is going to invest in new forest projects in India;

(b) whether this investment is being made for Aravali forests, Rajasthan Forest Development and for other projects; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) to (c) Aravali Forest Project, Rajasthan has been posed to Japan Bank for International Co-operation (JBIC) through the Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance for Consideration for funding. The cost of the project is Rs. 555.75 crores, covering an area of about 1,45,000 hectares over a period of eight years. This project has been appraised by JBIC in 1998-99. Decision for funding the project has not been taken by them. No other forestry project has been formally posed to JBIC for funding.

Agricultural forests

†2190. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH 'SURYA': Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 69 percent of total forest in the country comprise agriculture forests;

(b) if so, what is their position in forest policy of the country;

† Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.

[11 August, 2000]

RAJYA SABHA

(c) whether there is any scheme to encourage farmers for plantation of trees in agriculture land;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, whether Government would formulate such a scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The National Forest Policy, 1988 envisages that the individuals and institution should be motivated and facilitated to undertake tree-farming and growing of fodder plants, grasses and legumes on the their own lands.

(c) to (e) There is no specific Centrally Sponsored Scheme specially to take up plantation works on the agricultural lands of the formers. However, seedlings are made available from the nurseries of State Forest Departments on subsidized rates for the benefit of the farmers. The department of Land Resources is implementing Desert Development, Drought Prone Area Development and Integrated Wastelands Development Programmes for the development of wastelands/degraded land on watershed basis. The programmes are being developed with active community participation by means of in-situ soil and moisture conservation including pasture development and tree plantation on common lands where the agricultural lands form part of the wastelands to be developed.

Maintenance of Sewage under Ganga Action Plan

2191. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) what are the reasons for the State's failure to operate and maintain the sewage generated in towns along the river Ganga under Action Plan I;

(b) the action proposed to ask the State Governments to properly maintain the sewage treatment plants, sewage pumping stations, etc., to keep the Ganga clean; and

(c) the progress made in executing the second phase of the Ganga Action Plan?